

## Global food security and Australia

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### Abstract:

Executive Summary: Food security relates to the physical availability and access to food, as well as to its affordability. With the escalation of global food prices through 2007 and 2008, the issue of food security, both globally and domestically, attracted considerable public and policy attention. The most serious effects of the rise in global food prices were on the urban poor in low income countries. This resulted in civil unrest in some countries and an increase in protectionist trade policies in others. In developing countries, where populations faced declining physical availability of food as well as sharply deteriorated affordability, many people were forced to reduce nutritional intakes and defer expenditures on essential items, such as health and education, to survive. In the long term, another food crisis will only be avoided if a concerted effort is made, by all governments, to raise the global food supply. The seriousness of the recent global food crisis showed how sensitive the world is to a sudden decline in the availability of food staples. The risk of future food shortages is increasingly likely given the increased severity of weather events over the past several years; the challenges posed by climate change; and the increased demand for food because of the increasing global population and rising incomes in key developing countries. The initiatives required to raise the global food supply in the medium to long term are clear, and need to be implemented across the world. A key initiative is greater investment in public and privately funded research and development specific to the needs of the most vulnerable countries. Specifically, research committed to developing more drought tolerant crops for arid climates is necessary, as climate change poses a significant threat to agriculture and water supplies globally. Regulations in some countries that restrict the use of genetically modified seeds must be reconsidered. Poorer nations should be given the opportunity to increase domestic food supplies and export surpluses to other countries that may presently limit access to genetically modified foods. Biofuels subsidies must also be reconsidered in light of the diversion of substantial quantities of cereals and oilseeds from food and feed uses to biofuels feedstocks, particularly in the United States and the European Union. For Australia, there is no immediate threat to the domestic food supply. Australia will continue to produce in excess of what it consumes and will therefore be able to contribute to the world's food needs. However, Australia faces its own challenges, namely climate change, diminishing water supplies and soil degradation, agricultural labour shortages and declining productivity. Australia's role in ensuring global food security extends beyond its own immediate needs. Australia has an opportunity to share its technologies, institutional knowledge, agricultural policy and rural development capability with poorer nations through extension initiatives and aid programs. Collaborative agricultural research, particularly in the areas of tropical and dryland agriculture, would benefit multiple stakeholders from a range of countries. Education opportunities, delivered through development assistance scholarship programs or formal and informal training schemes, are other capacity building initiatives Australia can take to assist developing and emerging countries.

### Source:

[http://www.agriculture.gov.au/abares/publications/display?url=http://143.188.17.20/anrdl/DAFFService/display.php?fid=pe\\_abare99001684.xml](http://www.agriculture.gov.au/abares/publications/display?url=http://143.188.17.20/anrdl/DAFFService/display.php?fid=pe_abare99001684.xml)

### Resource Description

#### Communication:

resource focus on research or methods on how to communicate or frame issues on climate change; surveys of attitudes, knowledge, beliefs about climate change

A focus of content

#### Communication Audience:

audience to whom the resource is directed

Policymaker

#### Exposure :

weather or climate related pathway by which climate change affects health

Ecosystem Changes, Food/Water Security, Food/Water Security

**Food/Water Security:** Food Access/Distribution

# Climate Change and Human Health Literature Portal

## Geographic Feature:

resource focuses on specific type of geography

Urban

## Geographic Location:

resource focuses on specific location

Non-United States

**Non-United States:** Australasia

## Health Impact:

specification of health effect or disease related to climate change exposure

Malnutrition/Undernutrition

## Mitigation/Adaptation:

mitigation or adaptation strategy is a focus of resource

Adaptation

**Population of Concern:** A focus of content

## Population of Concern:

populations at particular risk or vulnerability to climate change impacts

Low Socioeconomic Status

## Resource Type:

format or standard characteristic of resource

Policy/Opinion

## Timescale:

time period studied

Time Scale Unspecified

## Vulnerability/Impact Assessment:

resource focus on process of identifying, quantifying, and prioritizing vulnerabilities in a system

A focus of content